

# THE PACIFIC COMMERCIAL ADVERTISER

WALTER G. SMITH : : : : : EDITOR.

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## CLAUS SPRECKELS AND SONS.

The presence of Claus Spreckels in Honolulu naturally suggests the great services he has rendered to the Hawaiian Islands and the debt of gratitude which the Hawaiian people owe to him for his promotion of their leading industry and the financial support he extended to their former government. For many years he was identified, in a leading sense, with the extension of the sugar interest and, while his various enterprises advanced his own ambition, they are also associated with the most solid and permanent improvements in the condition of the islands themselves. Our wealth has been largely increased, our business processes systematized, and our advancement in civilization promoted, through the broad views, the definite methods, the sound judgment and the decision of character, which, in his relation to Hawaii, Mr. Spreckels has constantly evinced. It is true that, in the past, there have been local controversies, with some of which he was connected, but they have long since ceased, the destiny of the territory is settled, and now, in the evening of his wonderful career, with his iron memory, his great faculties and his stored experiences in full vigor, Mr. Spreckels may rest secure in the consciousness that his labors are comprehended and that he deserves and receives the practically unanimous respect and affection of our population, independently of party, class or sect. The hope that his physical health is only temporarily impaired and that, amidst scenes of beauty, such as here surround him in an incomparable climate, and with sympathizing hearts responding to his desire for rest and peace, he may be speedily restored, is a daily and common expression of our appreciative citizens and residents.

But Mr. Claus Spreckels has won distinction, even renown, in a wider field than is embraced in Hawaii, and his career is full of lessons and encouragement to the younger generation. He is easily the first citizen of California, and, beyond any living man, is identified with the unequalled development of the western part of the United States. Starting as far back as 1856, with a capital mainly consisting of brain and energy, his forward and upward path has been steadily opened with unwavering purpose, with iron will, and with concentration in the community where his first success originated. Other capitalists of the Pacific Coast have transferred their investments and established their homes far away from the scene of their early accumulations. Mr. Spreckels, really at the head of them all, though far-reaching in his transactions and his enterprises, has centered his operations in the State of which he became a citizen nearly fifty years ago. Though large enough in his capacity and in his business to be recognized throughout the world, he is distinctively known as the leading capitalist of the West.

An enumeration of his labors and their fruits is impracticable and unnecessary, for they are part of current history, and for an educated citizen not to have heard of his name and of his achievements would belie his intelligence. The characteristics of his career, however, deserve special notice, for they have been marked and effective. He has always been noted for fidelity to his friends and to his word, and as a man who, without affected humanitarianism, without pretense of any kind, has never disregarded the welfare of the community in which he lived or of mankind in general. His personal life has been simple, pure and domestic, and it is not out of place to add that he is much indebted to his wife, the mother of thirteen children, who, to all the qualities that could mould and adorn a home, has added a fine intellect and discriminating wisdom. His plans have been formed long in advance of their execution and with unerring prescience. Every difficulty and every obstruction has been anticipated and met. When the time was ripe and the exactions of railroad corporations were felt by Mr. Spreckels, as they were also felt by the people of California, he did not hesitate but promptly organized the San Francisco and San Joaquin Valley Railroad Company, which reduced freight charges to a reasonable figure. When he failed to obtain a satisfactory contract for the lighting of his splendid Claus Spreckels building in San Francisco, he founded and established the Independent Electric Light and Power Company, which spread its service over the city and soon brought its rival corporation to terms. These two enterprises, involving the risk or the use of millions, were the result of an unbending determination by Mr. Spreckels not to be victimized by monopoly and, while they ultimately turned out to be profitable, they completely identified him with the public good. Years before, as against an Eastern monopoly, he erected in Pennsylvania the largest sugar refinery in the United States, and thus secured the fullest protection for the sugar interests in the West.

Absolutely fearless, though deliberative and cautious, he has broken down all opposition to his vast projects, and has never yet failed. But also he has never been ranged on the side of bad citizenship or corrupt politics, and has stood firmly for right and justice. His relations with thousands of employees have always been of the best. It is believed that no instance can be recalled of a strike or dissatisfaction among them. In the midst of indefatigable labor, he has been among the most approachable of men. His benefactions, though unheralded, have been innumerable. No genuine cause has ever appealed to him in vain. As a single example, out of hundreds, it may be noted that, when, some years ago, the streets of San Francisco were filled with the unemployed and a hundred thousand dollars was needed for their relief, at the meeting for the purpose of raising this amount, held in the rooms of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Claus Spreckels was the first man to contribute: "I cannot make a speech," he said; "put me down for five thousand dollars."

This gentleman, whose instructive biography will ultimately be written, has lived to see his surviving sons fully entered upon similar careers, and enrolled among the working millionaires of the day. The volume of business transacted by John D. Spreckels, who is well known in Hawaii, is almost inconceivable. From morning till night, his acute and trained faculties are constantly exerted. It is doubtful whether a quicker eye for mechanical complications especially exists in the Union. He is also a full believer in the American doctrine, applicable especially to millionaires, that drones are superfluous under republican institutions. His combined exactness and liberality are proverbial on the mainland. Adolph B. Spreckels is daily at his desk, plunged into multifarious occupations, but finds time to serve as a most efficient Commissioner of Golden Gate Park, to stimulate the operations of the State Agricultural Society of California, and to breed and raise fine horses on one of the best-equipped of model stock-farms. Rudolph Spreckels, who lately visited his parents at Honolulu, and is also well and favorably known in Hawaii, is a shrewd, industrious and prosperous investor. C. A. Spreckels, another son of Mr. Claus Spreckels, is also to be ranked as a man of large affairs, laborious and successful. These four gentlemen are prominent factors in the recently unexampled growth and advancement of the State of California. Their opportunities were perhaps unusual, but they have been systematically improved, and there is every prospect that the third generation, which Mr. Claus Spreckels has been privileged to see, will not be behind the second.

This is an inadequate sketch of the history, during half a century, of a family of American millionaires, who are constantly progressing, who are wrought into commercial, financial and social life, whose power is great, whose influence is wide and deep, whose ideals and standards are high, and who typify and elevate the finest characteristics of American civilization, now with one mighty association, leading humanity itself. The facts speak for themselves and do not need eulogistic comment. They appeal with the force of inspiration to the ardent, ambitious, self-poised and self-contained aspirants for the honors and the profits of the future.

Another settlement association is out for public lands of which leases are expiring on the island of Hawaii. As in the Kau case, so in the Hakalau, the intending settlers purpose raising sugar cane on such portion of the land as may be suitable for the cultivation. In the Hakalau case, too, they are Portuguese used to sugar plantation work. Successful cane-growing by citizen settlers in these movements will go far toward settling the greatest existing problem of Hawaii, and doing so on the side of development along American lines.

A Corrupt Practices Act has been passed by the Connecticut Legislature which, among other features, makes it the privilege not only of a defeated candidate but of any citizen to institute proceedings for voiding a fraudulent election. The Outlook, briefly reviewing the measure, says: "Such a law as this is as truly an instrument on behalf of popular liberty as a bill of rights or a magna charta. It is a weapon against the most insidious form of tyranny—that of corruption."

It is strongly suggested on the mainland that opposition to the forest-reserve policy of the Federal Government comes largely from would-be timber exploiters. They are said to have adapted the old exhortation so as to make it read, "Grab, sell and saw today, for tomorrow we die."

Commenting on Secretary Taft's address to the Yale law graduating class, wherein the jury system, considered as a means of preventing and punishing crime, was represented as "a glaring and alarming failure in the United States," Harper's Weekly quotes Justice Brewer of the United States Supreme Court as having "vigorously championed the abolishment of appeals in criminal cases, except where the merits were involved in the clearest manner." On this the weekly remarks:

Few, indeed, would go so far as to abolish altogether by statute the defendant's right of appeal in criminal cases, and thus leave the correction of judicial wrong exclusively to the pardoning power. Rather is it an opinion tending to prevail that, while appeals should continue to be allowed, a provision of law should be enacted by which no judgment of the court below should be reversed except for an error the avoidance of which the appellate court, after reading all the evidence, can affirmatively say would have led to a different verdict.

Practically the Supreme Court of Hawaii, in criminal appeal cases for years past, has observed the principle here advocated. Its stamping of minor irregularities as "not reversible error" has upheld many verdicts.

Rt. Rev. Jas. H. Van Buren, Episcopal Bishop of Porto Rico, has the following to say about that island:

The material outlook for the island is very encouraging. The sugar crop returns are very satisfactory, and the exportation of this product now is larger than ever before. Of tobacco, while quantities of it are being raised, there yet is by no means enough to supply the demands of the American market. The coffee crop is rapidly picking up since the hurricane of 1899, and cotton is being grown on a scale never before attempted. The cotton gins at San Juan are utterly unable to care for all the material that is coming in, and plans are under way for doubling their capacity. Cotton growing on a large scale is a new industry for the island, and it is destined to play a large part in its material prosperity. Recently I have been over the fruit-growing districts, and find the citrus varieties especially doing very well. So much for material conditions.

What Porto Rico does in diversified agriculture Hawaii could do if it would only get from under the illusion that this rich soil and mild climate can only produce one dependable crop.

Either Hawaii's health interests are well guarded or Hawaii's labor interests are under an illegitimate ban at Yokohama, when four hundred and fifty out of five hundred intending emigrants to these islands were rejected on account of suspected trachoma. In the opinion of the Hawaii Shippo, the lately checked immigration companies are trying to get satisfaction at the other end of the line, and the terrible prevalence of the disease mentioned exists chiefly in a corrupt medical eye.

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